

National Republican

W. J. MURTAGH, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE REPUBLICAN HAS A LARGER CIRCULATION THAN ANY OTHER MORNING PAPER IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

DECEMBER 12, 1873.

OUR NAVAL PREPARATIONS.

In the hill which now precedes the storm, or which may be followed by satisfactory and, let us hope, lasting peace between the United States and Spain, we have time and sufficient reason to investigate the changes which have been wrought in the condition of our "little navy." The preparations which have been made to avert the disaster of a naval war without a naval force at the command of the Government have been so effective as to demand the astonished approval both of Congress and the people. When the news of the Virginia affair was first received, the impulse of the country showed itself in a determination that the insult to our flag should be avenged. To this impulse the head of the Navy Department responded with patriotic and most energetic, as well as rapid action. The wild demands that a gunboat should be sent to Havana "to blow the island out of water" were heeded only as the extravagant outburst of the people, who, without thought regarding needful precautions, easily asked that impossibilities be performed. The principal yards on which the Department depends for repairs are those at Norfolk and New York. The war vessels laying in ordinary or out of commission at those points were immediately placed in the hands of workmen for repair. Secretary Robeson proceeded with the unusual and bold, though justifiable, method of meeting the emergency by demand from the bureaus of construction, repairs and provision all the money which Congress had provided to conduct the operations of the navy for the entire year to be used immediately. He reminded his subordinates of the overshadowing importance of the necessity for energetic action, and seems to have infused into them some of his own enthusiasm. He was satisfied only with personal observation of the manner in which his orders were executed. For the purpose of this personal observation he proceeded to New York, Philadelphia and Boston, and at those points inspected the progress of the needed repairs. He found at Boston the Franklin and Brooklyn dismantled and in ordinary, but perfect in timbers, only requiring equipment and crew. At New York he found the Colorado, the vessel which, in the Corcoran, had been the flag-ship of Admiral Rogers, had borne our flag in the presence of an armed enemy, in a similar condition, and the orders issued for her repair were so rapidly executed that from a comparatively worthless hulk she was transformed into a worthy vessel, and is now about in Cuban waters, having upon her decks a formidable armament, and manned by seven hundred American seamen. At New York he also found the Florida, Tennessee and other vessels, which, under the magic inspiration of his indomitable will, are either ready now or will be so in time to meet the demands that may be made upon them for active service.

At Philadelphia the Canadagua was put in the process of repair, and the admiral, and many others are either in service now or are nearly ready as to enable the Government to avail itself of their use when hostilities begin, if they are unfortunately needed for such a purpose. The European fleet is now under way to our shores, and more than one half of it will be in such close communication with Washington before the middle of the coming week as to render its services available in any emergency. Repairing stations have been established at Erie, Pa., Cleveland, Ohio, Chicago, Ill., and Burlington, Vt. Congress will doubtless authorize the needed increase of the naval force to 18,500 men, and they will be readily recruited at these stations.

While we have not attempted to give anything more than an imperfect sketch of the prominent features of the preparations, which have been directed by the Secretary in person, we have given enough, in our opinion, to show that he has been no less active than the necessity of the case required. The task has not been an idle one. The requirements of his ordinary duties have in the meantime been faithfully met, and his time has been fully occupied with the increase of business in the Department consequent upon the meeting of Congress. When we look back upon the fact that three weeks ago we virtually had a useless navy at our command, it is difficult to realize that in such a short space of time such a wonderful change could have been effected, and when we realize it we cannot fail to accord to the energetic officer who has accomplished it the greatest praise. He may well point with pride to the result of his labor.

FALSE SOUTHERN OPINION.

At a time when the Administration, and Congress under its lead, together with the people of the entire North, are making most earnest efforts to begin the "era of good feeling" of which we have heard so much and practically realized so little; and when the people of the two sections seem to vie with each other in their anxiety for the maintenance of the honor of our common flag, it becomes the newspaper writers of the South to revive the bitterness and the prejudices of the war by republishing the exploded lies which obtained circulation during that unhappy period. We had no reason to expect anything else than this recrudescence from such transports as Judah Early, or such unprincipled wretches as Pat Donan; but, in view of the profusions of good feeling made by the so-called respectable journals of the South during and subsequent to the late political campaigns, we were led to expect something better from them than that which we find in the malignant spirit which characterizes their comments upon the death of the late Judge Underwood, Judah Early, and the majority of his associates of the Southern Historical Society, very naturally over the belief now that our flag is the symbol of despotism, although the great hero who carried it to victory so often, and now as Chief Magistrate maintains its honor unassailed, has persistently advised that all those who fought against it during the rebellion, including such ingrates as Sheridan's shillcock, shall be restored to the full rights of citizenship. At the same time such scoundrels as Pat Donan, entering to the malignant prejudices of a most despicable class of ex-thralls, very naturally make public an offer of a reward for the assassination of President Grant. We know, and do not hesitate to assert without fear of contradiction, that the motives which prompt the acts of these pitiable malcontents are not in accord with the pervading sympathy of the Southern people. We believe that the same impulses of generous forgiveness and desire to forget the past animates the hearts of the people of both sections. For this reason, we denounce the wickedness contained in the extract, given below, from the columns of the Petersburg (Va.) *Index and Appeal*, not only as malicious and uncalled for, but as calculated to make every true man shun now endeavor to forget. We do not care to criticize the taste or the manner in which the memory of the dead is treated. It is so repugnant to all sense of decency and to the respect which civilized humanity pays to the departed, that we read with an involuntary shudder of most intense disgust. And yet these people intend to be "reconstructed," speaking Judge Underwood's death, the *Index and Appeal* says: "Like Lincoln, who fell by the assassin's hand, in the very midst of his triumphs in injury; King, who died in his own throat; Sheridan, and Butler will die natural deaths!" If they do, "they will be exceptions to their kind."

It is to be wondered at that, in view of the publication of such opinions as this by the acknowledged leaders of public thought in the South, a party is maintained in the North which has for its basis the assumption that loyal and complete reconstruction is among the impossibilities of the period! It is useless to answer this question with the declaration that criticism of the acts of public men, however severe they may be, does not betray a disloyal sentiment. The animus which prompts such a publication is sufficiently plain to show that the writer has not and cannot have a particle of sympathy in common with the people of the North. The man who would at this juncture so disgrace himself as to reproduce the calumnies of the *Index and Appeal* is destined to be disgraced at every turn.

A GOON NEWSPAPER.

(From the Philadelphia *Press*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN comes to us in enlarged size and in new type. Aside from its position it is an excellent paper.

GOON NEWSPAPER.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN, organ of the Administration, comes to us enlarged and very much improved in appearance. It is certainly a good newspaper.

AN APPRAISER'S WORK.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN has been enlarged, and comes to us with the impress of new type upon it. In many respects the REPUBLICAN is now in its new building. It is beyond comparison.

AN APPRAISER'S WORK.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN is now in its new quarters on Pennsylvania Avenue, the proprietor has erected a building which is equal to his public enterprise and an ornament to the city.

DISMISSEMENT OF ITS PROPERTY.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN looks well in its new home, and its enlarged and improved improved appearance. It is one of the best papers at that price.

AN APPRAISER'S WORK.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN is now in its new quarters, and made its appearance in a handsome new equipment of typography. Now, if the REPUBLICAN will only improve and purify its mind, and discard its virulent and impudent language, it will make a really good paper.

AN APPRAISER'S WORK.

(From the *Baltimore Sun*.)

The WASHINGTON REPUBLICAN is in which one of the first war-with-Spain journals in America, now finds much to advise in the policy pursued by Secretary Fish. The sober second thought is the right thing, after all.

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